

Message Text

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TAGS: P/ M, NATO, PFOR

SUBJECT: NATO CLAIMS AGAINST FRANCE

FOR MCAULIFFE.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE OF MARCH 14:

QTE. ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID TODAY THAT THEY HOPED THAT THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT, FRESH FROM A NEW ELECTION VICTORY, WOULD START POSITIVE ACTION ON THE FIVE- YEAR- OLD CLAIM FOR COMPENSATION FOR COSTS ARISING FROM THE EVICTION OF UNITED STATES FORCES FROM FRANCE IN 1966-1967.

DEFENSE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID THAT THE AMOUNT OF THE AMERICAN CLAIM WAS CLASSIFIED. QUALIFIED SOURCES, HOWEVER, SAID THAT A FIGURE OF \$350 MILLION WOULD NOT BE FAR OUT OF LINE. THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION HAS ALSO PRESENTED FRANCE WITH A CLAIM FOR APPROXIMATELY \$293.4 MILLION RESULTING FROM THE WITHDRAWAL OF NATO FORCES FROM UNCLASSIFIED

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FRANCE IN THE SAME PERIOD.

IT WAS ESTIMATED THEN THAT FRANCE HAD TAKEN OVER UNITED STATES FACILITIES THAT HAD COST APPROXIMATELY \$912.7 MILLION. THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS STATED RECENTLY THAT MILITARY CONSTRUCTION COSTS MADE NECESSARY BY THE RELOCATION OF AMERICAN FORCES HAD AMOUNTED TO APPROXIMATELY \$255 MILLION.

THE AMERICAN CLAIM WAS MADE IN SEPTEMBER, 1968. THE JOHNSON ADMINISTRATION ASKED THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO ADVISE IT WHEN NEGOTIATIONS COULD BE STARTED TO ENABLE THE UNITED STATES TO PRESENT FRANCE WITH CLAIMS RELATED TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN FORCES. IN MID- JANUARY OF 1969, THE UNITED STATES ADVISED FRANCE THAT IT CONSIDERED ITSELF ENTITLED TO COMPENSATION ON TWO COUNTS. THE FIRST, ACCORDING TO A RECENT REPORT TO CONGRESS BY THE CONTROLLER GENERAL, WAS THE VALUE OF " THE REMAINING USEFUL LIFE" OF THE " ASSETS, FACILITIES AND IMPROVEMENTS" THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD FINANCED AND FRANCE HAD WITHDRAWN FROM AMERICAN USE.

THERE HAD BEEN 189 AMERICAN INSTALLATIONS IN FRANCE, 112 BELONGING TO THE ARMY, 76 TO THE AIR FORCE AND ONE TO THE NAVY, AND THEIR CAPITAL INVENTORY WAS ESTIMATED AT \$558 MILLION.

AMONG THE MOST COSTLY AND IMPORTANT STRATEGIC INSTALLATIONS WAS AN OIL PIPELINE THAT COST ABOUR \$54,660,000.

THE SECOND COUNT WAS THE AMERICAN COST OF CLOSING DOWN THESE FACILITIES AND MOVING MEN AND MATERIEL TO OTHER NATO COUNTRIES. THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT HAS ESTIMATED THAT RELOCATION EXPENSES INCLUDED PROVISION OF OPERATIONAL MILITARY FACILITIES TO REPLACE THOSE LEFT IN FRANCE, THE MOVEMENT OF PERSONNEL AND MATERIEL, CLOSING AND LIQUIDATION COSTS AND THE MOVEMENT OF SUPPORT FACILITIES.

THE CONTROLLER GENERAL'S REPORT NOTED THAT " REPRESENTATIVES OF FRANCE ADVISED THE UNITED STATES THAT ITS CLAIM IS BEING CONSIDERED."

UNITED STATES AND OTHER NATO FORCES WERE OBLIGED TO
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RETIRE FROM FRANCE AFTER PRESIDENT DE GAULLE ENDED FRENCH

INTEGRATION IN THE ALLIANCE' S MILITARY ORGANIZATION. FRANCE, HOWEVER, HAS REMAINED A MEMBER OF NATO. THE DE GAULLE DECISION, IT WAS EXPLAINED IN PARIS AT THE TIME, WAS BASED ON THE PRESIDENT' S CONVICTION THAT FRANCE MUST BE THE SOLE ARBITER OF HER MILITARY POLICIES.

MILITARY SOURCES HERE IN WASHINGTON AND AT SUPREME HEAD-QUARTERS ALLIED POWERS EUROPE POINT OUT THAT EVICTION ALSO WEAKENED NATO' S STRATEGIC POSITION. MOST OF THE INSTALLATIONS, INCLUDING FUEL, FOOD AND WEAPONS DEPOTS, HAD TO BE MOVED EAST INTO GERMANY AND THUS CLOSER TO WARSAW PACT AIRFIELDS AND MISSILES.

IT WAS CONSIDERED INADVISABLE TO MOVE MOST OF THESE

INSTALLATIONS EAST OF THE RHINE, WHICH WOULD BE THE WARSAW PACT' S MAJOR PHYSICAL OBJECTIVE IN ANY MOVEMENT INTO WESTERN EUROPE. CONSEQUENTLY, THE INSTALLATIONS ARE " BUNCHED" IN WHAT NATO OFFICERS CONSIDER DANGEROUS PROXIMITY IN A SMALL AREA.

SOME OFFICIALS AND OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT THE PRESENT STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN FRANCE AND NATO WILL DILUTE ANY PRESSURE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT MIGHT SEEK TO BRING TO BEAR ON FRANCE FOR SETTLEMENT OF THE CLAIM.

COOPERATION BETWEEN NATO FORCES AND THE FRENCH ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE HAS BEEN QUIETLY GROWING. QUIET HAS BEEN NECESSARY BECAUSE THE FRENCH MINISTER OF DEFENSE, MICHEL DEBRE, A STANCH GAULLIST, OPPOSES ANY WEAKENING OF HIS MENTOR' S STAND AGAINST MILITARY INTEGRATION.

AMERICAN PRESSURE FOR SETTLEMENT, THESE SOURCES SAID, MIGHT AROUSE GENERAL OPPOSITION IN THE FRENCH

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